1: Coon E-5 (1926-1927) 1931 MX3 Rif MX3

CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

KINSHIP GROUPS AND POLITICAL DIVISIONS

[594] 614 [591] The smallest social grouping in the Rif is, of course, the biological family, consisting of father, mother, and offspring; but the importance of this fundamental group is often obscured by the large family group called *awar* (plural *iwaren*), or "vein." [1] The *vein* consists of a father, his wives, descendants, and descendants' wives, and his brothers, their wives, descendants, and descendants' wives. Since Riffian society is patrilineal and families are usually patronymic, daughters who have married into another *vein* become affiliated with the group into which they have married, and offspring of these daughters are considered to belong to their fathers' *veins*. When the brothers composing the oldest generation in a *vein* die, it splits into as many *veins* as there were brothers. Thus the sons of each deceased brother become the brothers forming the elder stratum of the new *vein*. In this way during the course of generations a single union of a man and his wife may give rise to numerous related *veins*.

614 621 These related *veins* collectively take the name of *ighs* (plural *ikhsan*), or "bone." [2] The *bone* is, however, something more important than a mere collection of related *veins*. In regions of sedentary life it generally takes the form of a village, or politically independent section of a village, and may include *veins* descended not only from the eponymous ancestor of the *bone* but also from strangers who have been adopted into the *bone*. The arrival of these strangers who become ancestors of spurious *veins* is due to the Riffian custom of selling property in order to pay fines or blood money assessed by the governing body. A man who has sold all his landed property and livestock in order to meet such an obligation feels ashamed to remain in his own village and often fears reprisal for his offence, and migrates, generally swiftly and secretly, to some other part of the Rif. When he has arrived at a sufficiently distant village, he hires himself out to a landowner in that village, or, if he seems to be a valuable potential adjunct to the village's military forces, is given land by popular subscription. He thus becomes a member of the *bone* into which his ill-fortune has thrust him, and is expected to marry into this *bone*, generally taking as wife a daughter of the man who first employed and sheltered him, if that man happens to have a daughter available. The newcomer and his wife become the forebears of a new *vein* in the *bone*, and this new *vein* may in turn split time after time until the *bone* contains a large number of alien *veins*. The *veins* descended from strangers exist under the disadvantage that they are not allowed any part in the government,[3] but are at the same time expected to contribute

[1] "Vein" is the literal translation of this word. I have discovered no sociological term in the English language exactly comparable to it, and hence have decided that to translate it literally, and to render this translation consistently throughout, will be less confusing to the reader than to leave it in its Berber form. In describing a highly complex social organization such as is found in the Rif clarity is of greater importance than philological exactitude.

[2] "Bone" is the literal translation, and has been retained through lack of any exact equivalent, although either "sib" or "gens" might be loosely applied. The endogamic character of the bone is not implied in either of these terms.

[3] Wherever the Riffian type of government is found, this is true. Under the Arab system the stranger restriction naturally cannot apply.

1: Coon E-5 (1926-1927) 1931 MX3 Rif MX3

Outside, the guests eat. In the old days in many places a friend of the groom provided a tub of *seksu*, so large and so full that it took four men to carry it, lifting it by chain handles on the sides, and ten men could sit around it eating at once. Another man would bring a spouted pot full of honey mixed with melted butter, which he would pour on the *seksu* as dry spots were uncovered. When a guest was through he made way for another, and when all were through they re-assembled and threw coins as a gift to the groom into what remained of the *seksu*. The usual amount for each to throw in was a dollar. Since the discontinuance of the practice of serving such large tubs of *seksu*, the money is thrown into smaller bowls of *seksu* and into brass trays. Sometimes enemies or rivals throw increasingly large sums into the *seksu* in order to shame and exceed each other until one has run out of funds, when the other gloats over his rival's discomfiture. When a man thus runs out of money he may throw in cartridges, knives, or any other negotiable object. One famous instance is related wherein a man led his mule into the room and backed it into the tub, after he had thrown in everything else he possessed but his clothes.

Defloration of the bride does not necessarily take place on this night, since the couple is often extremely shy, especially if both are very young. If coitus takes place on the final night of the wedding, a portion of the bride's clothing or a cloth specially intended for the purpose is passed through the door and around among the guests, as proof of the bride's virginity. If the defloration takes place on a later occasion, the family of the groom holds a rapidly assembled celebration, called the *shahad er kreir*, to celebrate the event. If the bride is not a virgin the groom may send her home and get his money back, or may keep her and get back a portion of his money. In case he is fond of her he may do nothing about it, postponing the official defloration until some time when he can falsify the tokens of virginity. Such indulgence usually happens only when it is the groom who has deflowered her before marriage. If he keeps her without making any such exhibition, real or false, no action is taken by the community, but the couple starts its married life with an unsavory reputation. Fear of incurring the wrath of the bride's family sometimes prevents the groom from sending back a hymenless bride, much as he may wish to do so.

There is a tradition in the Rif that the *jus primae noctis* was formerly practiced in certain tribes of the Werghan Senhaja: a certain man from el Kelaa of Beni Ulid was sent for to attend weddings in Beni Wenjin, Marnissa, Fenassa, Ulad Azam, Beni Koraa, Bu Adl, Zrarka, and Beni Krama, where he was feasted during all the days of the ceremony, and on the night of the bride's arrival deflowered and then left her. The man is said to be dead and the custom discontinued. The Riffians tell the story as a joke on the Senhajans, and although this circumstance does not necessarily render the tale false it does not increase its chances of being true.

The marriage of a divorced woman is everywhere carried out with less ceremony than that of a girl who is being married for the first time. In the area in which the *sabbain errarit* is chanted, the brother of a divorced woman does not mount on the mule behind her. The same is true of the marriage of a widow.

Residence of the couple after marriage may be matrilocal, patrilocal, in the house of a brother of the groom, or, when possible, in a separate house. Matrilocal residence occurs when the groom is a newcomer to the *bone* and serves the bride's father, as a share-laborer; residence in the house of the groom's father or brother takes place when the groom is not wealthy enough to build a new house or buy an unoccupied one; residence in the house of

1: Coon E-5 (1926-1927) 1931 MX3 Rif MX3

591 the brother instead of that of the father depends on whether or not the father is living, and whether or not the brother has paid for the wedding, for the bride, or for both.

587 In the case of the levirate, which has been discussed under inheritance, the newly-married widow usually remains with her children in the house of her first husband, to which the new husband comes as a visitor rather than as a regular occupant. All wives who have been married in any way other than through the levirate usually live in the same house together.

Not only is the levirate a common feature of Riffian society, but the sororate is also practiced. A man whose wife dies young is expected to marry one of her sisters in her place, and no fee is demanded for the second one. A man cannot, however, marry his wife's sister during the lifetime of the first one.

595 Polygyny in the Rif is more often the result of the function of the levirate than the wholly voluntary marriage of more than one wife. Only men of unusual wealth ordinarily marry more than one wife from choice. Women given a man of a different *bone* by means of a magical compulsion, the purpose of which is the alliance of the two *bones*, form an additional class of plural wives.

589 Such is the social economy of the Riffians that spinsters are practically non-existent.

DIVORCE

586 If a husband and his wife both desire a divorce, the clerk gives her a paper making her free to remarry and she goes back to the house of her parents.

If the wife desires a divorce and the husband does not, the wife may go to the house of her parents to live. If she remains there more than fifteen days without returning to her husband's house she is automatically divorced and is entitled to a paper to that effect from the clerk. This procedure is not as easy as it sounds, however, since the woman's parents may object to the divorce and send her back again by force.

The husband may send envoys, usually his father and brothers, to the house of his wife's parents to slaughter a goat and prepare a meal there, which action serves as a magical compulsion upon the owner of the house to accede to their wishes. The ultimate decision as to whether or not the wife remains all of the fifteen days depends upon the attitude of her parents, the strength of her husband's desire to get her back, and the relative importance of the two *veins* involved. If the wife is from a different *bone* from that of the husband serious hostilities may result.

A husband seldom divorces a wife against her will except for infidelity, but he may divorce her for lesser offenses if he desires or dares. He may if he wishes divorce her for failure to bear him children, though in this case he usually marries a second wife and keeps the first one as well.

A woman who wishes to be divorced and cannot, on account of the opposition of her family and of her husband, may run away from the tribe with her lover, if she has one; or alone, if she has not and is sufficiently courageous. Women who have run away on account of unfortunate marriages or as a consequence of being caught in adultery sometimes go to Fez and become prostitutes. So much trouble can be caused a man by a wife whom he has married against her will that few men are willing to undertake the liability of doing so.

3: Hart E-5 (1953-1954)1954 MX3 Rif MX3

The houses are widely scattered up and down the mountains, each one being at least three hundred meters away from the next. Its construction and situation reflect the independent spirit of its owner. Almost always isolated to at least this extent, such a dwelling is usually the residence of a man, his unmarried brothers an sisters, his wife or wives, and his unmarried children. This is only part of the family; the rest of it, living in similar houses the usual distance away, includes the man's married brothers and their wives and unmarried children. Thus the family, as it is know in Aith Wuryāghil, may consist of anywhere from one to ten separate households, and may number as many as fifty people, spread over three to four generations. Once the sons marry, they usually set up housekeeping on their own, but always within the family circle; when the daughters marry, they go to live with their husbands' people, for this is a patrilineal and patrilocal society. This extended family or *jājghū* (pl. *ijūjgha)* is a cooperative economic unit; the affiliations of in-marrying wives are with it rather than with the families from which they came. Once the last surviving member of the oldest generation dies off, the old *jājghū* splits into as many new *ijūjgha* as there were married brothers originally.

Ownership of property is concentrated in the hands of the elders of the *jājghū*, who parcel it out to their married sons on a provisional or on a permanent basis. If the former, the land goes back for redistribution among all the sons after the father's death; if the latter, the favored son needs a document signed by two *'adūl* proving that the land is his. If there are few sons, the eldest, if he is a sensible and honest man, is usually chosen to act as property administrator for all, when the father dies; but with many sons, the amount of land becomes too difficult to administer as a single unit; quarrels may develop, in which case the land is divided up among the sons, each one looking after his own share. The inheritance system follows standard Islamic practice, with the portion of one son equalling that of two daughters. If daughters whose share of the family property includes land marry into other villages or political sections, they are often induced to sell out their own holdings to their brothers so that the land will remain securely in the hands of the family. These are

592 593 The mother has the right to punish her children, but cannot wound them.

[562] Sons enjoy a preferential situation within the family; they help their father in agricultural tasks and in defense of the hearth and patrimony. They watch over the women of the house. Those of age 883 [785] (i.e. who have reached puberty)[46] start to fast during the month of Ramadan, as well as starting to plow and harvest the crops, after they have become too old to pasture goats. On reaching puberty, also, sons may spend nights away from home or be absent for periods of time. [584] They do not own property. If a son should reject the matrimonial proposition (put to him by his father) he must look for the bride-price (himself), telling his father of this obligation. He may leave his home without having to renounce his inheritance. After marriage, 885 593 although living in his father's house, he builds a bread-oven in [591] order to separate his meals from those of his father. He is then a contributor (apart from his father, who generally hands land over to him to work, but who is not obliged to give him his share of the [594] inheritance.) He pays his fines, and contributes his turn to the fqih's barley allotment, and forms a separate nubth on his own. 883 On reaching puberty, he attends the mosque and goes to markets and 885 weddings; when he marries, he begins to take part in the council 623 meetings to defend his rights; he enters a liff[47]; and sometimes he 616 794 becomes a member of a religious brotherhood[48].

575 Sons and daughters are their father's property. A divorced 593 wife, even though nursing a child, cannot take it with her; and there 586 have been cases in which her own father has returned her children to her husband.

591 Neolocality is
178 the preferred residence pattern today and matrilocality is permitted.

613 The rights and duties of these descent groups are rather
596 more fluid than is generally reported for African societies. As
602 I shall discuss in Chapter 5, the principle of patrimony does not
571 rule out other types of kinship alignment nor are kin ties the only form of relationship. Each community is made up of both kinsmen and non-kin with relations based on economic association, friendship or communal obligations.

178 In the Rif today the jural authority of the upper levels of segmentation[1] has been superseded by bureaucratic organization. [613] However, in the lower rungs such as the dharfiqth and ijuiga [596] traditional social obligations are still extant. [602]

621 The final social unit in the Rif is the local community or dchar, a neighborhood association both both kinsmen and non-kin (called douar in other Berber areas). The size of such a community varies considerably. If we take the tribe of Ibuqquyen
621 we find that it is divided into three fractions. In a survey I
619 took in 1966, the fraction of Tagidit had 14 dchars, the largest
162 having a population of 707 persons living in 114 different homesteads, while the smallest consisted of 94 persons living in 47 households. In the fraction of Axgar, the largest was 607 people living in 107 homes and the smallest was 163 people in 34 homes. In Izmourin, the most populous of the three fractions, the largest dchar had 1,509 people living in 268 homes and the smallest had 228 living in 35 homes.

[1] [i.e., the ar-rba or tribal levels--Analyst]